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ABSTRACT

A case history on the ecology of a black business district (B.B.D.) is presented, with respect to its location, development, persistence, and decline. Some of the major points emphasized in various sections are: (1) the ecological development of the B.B.D. in Birmingham is somewhat similar to the pattern identified for B.B.Ds in other southern cities; (2) the location of black businesses moves from a pattern of dispersion to contiguous concentration in the B.B.D. (3) the B.B.D. traditionally functions as a cultural and social center for blacks, and attached to it are certain establishments and a population that embraces a deviant or underworld culture; (4) the B.B.D. is experiencing land use changes, as indicated by the substantial decline in the number of businesses located within its boundaries during the past decade; and, (5) high business failures and the relocation of other businesses are the primary indicators of the declining functions of the B.B.D. with respect to the black population of Birmingham. While the fate of B.B.Ds located in other large cities throughout the nation cannot be generalized about, a few observations on the possible implications that the data presented on the B.B.D. in Birmingham might represent are made. It is possible that other B.B.Ds might experience similar declines in the economic as well as sociocultural functions they are performing for blacks given similar conditions of development, increasing decentralization of the black population, and increasing changes in the structure of black-white relations. (Author/AM)

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THE ECOLOGY OF A BLACK BUSINESS DISTRICT: SOCIOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

A case history on the ecology of a black business district is presented, with respect to its location, development, persistence, and decline. The historical functions of the black population of Birmingham are assessed. Finally, some implications of this analysis are presented for the black community of Birmingham, as well as for black communities located in large urban areas throughout the United States.

THE ECOLOGY OF A BLACK BUSINESS DISTRICT:

SOCIOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

I. INTRODUCTION

Historically, one of the consequences of the growth and concentration of blacks in relatively large urban areas has been the development of black business districts or business thoroughfares, each possessing certain common characteristics. DuBois's (1899) classic study of the Philadelphia Negro was the first serious attempt to study the nature and causes of this phenomenon. Since that time, numerous studies, focusing particularly on Northern and Eastern cities, have described and analyzed the nature of black business districts. Three general conclusions can be drawn from these studies. First, the black business district is an ecological phenomenon, which represents a specific form of urban adjustment for blacks.[1] In the North and East, the black business district has typically been described as being located in an area separated from the main business district, and as having evolved as a result of ecological succession--where blacks have moved into areas previously occupied by other ethnic groups (DuBois, 1899, Harmon, et al., 1929; Frazier, 1937; Osofsky, 1942; Drake and Clayton, 1945, Coles, 1969; Brimmer, 1971). O'Brien (1942) found a similar pattern for Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee; while Harmon, et al., (1929: 23-37) found dissimilar patterns for the three Southern cities they studied.[2]

Secondly, as a specific form of urban adjustment, the black business district is characterized by social and economic activities similar to those found in the dominant white business district and some that are

peculiarly its own. Black business districts function first and foremost as the main artery of black businesses located in a particular city (O'Brien, 1942; Drake and Clayton, 1945; and Carter, 1960). In addition, in the North and East, there has traditionally been a greater incidence of nonblack owners operating retail businesses in the district (Sturdivant, 1970; Reiss and Aldrich, 1971). Several writers have noted that the district has also functioned as a social and cultural center for blacks, which has in some instances given it a reputation as being a haven of underworld activities and a habitue population of deviants (O'Brien, 1942; Drake and Clayton, 1945; Robinson, 1950; Bowen, 1950; Spencer, 1952; Liebow, 1967; Suttles, 1968; Hannerz, 1969).

Finally, it has been noted that segregation and discrimination did much to condition the structure and functioning of the black business district as the nucleus of the black business world (Frazier, 1937; Carter, 1960; Sirjamaki, 1964; Williams, 1964). These two factors have imposed three restrictions on black businesses. The first arises from the fact that black businesses, for the most part, depended solely on blacks for patronage and therefore tended to be restricted to areas of the city (or the central business district) where blacks could have easy access to them (Pierce, 1947: 14-15); the second restriction is a reflection of the limited amount of business experience of blacks, as well as their inability to secure the necessary capital needed to establish businesses of certain types and sizes; and the final restriction arises from the fact that black businessmen were somewhat restricted from engaging in business activities that would necessitate their competing with whites even for black patrons (Drake and Clayton, 1945: 449; and Pierce, 1947: 15). Thus, frequently there has been

a very small number of retail and wholesale types of establishments located in the black business district, while eating, personal service (barber and beauty shops, lodging, etc.), and recreational establishments have tended to dominate the district. Blacks were excluded from patronizing these latter types of establishments in the larger white business district, particularly in Southern cities, where the pattern of segregation was so complete that black communities had to be almost self-sufficient in providing blacks with these types of goods and services (Clark, 1965: 29).

II. THE CURRENT INVESTIGATION

The primary purpose of the current report is to broaden knowledge of the historical nature of black business districts, with historical and relatively recent data on such a district in a large Southern city. Few attempts have been made to trace the historical origin and location of black business districts in the South. We have a general idea as to where they are located, but we have little or no knowledge of how they came to be located in a specific area. Given the more recent dramatic changes in black-white relations in the South, some attempt should be made to assess the implications that such change may have on the internal structure of black business districts. The subsequent discussion will be guided by the following questions: (1) Historically, what has been the ecological pattern of development of the black business district in Birmingham, Alabama?; (2) What type of establishments have tended to concentrate in the district?; (3) What processes were involved in its development and persistence?; (4) What segment of the black population of Birmingham patronizes these

establishments?; and (5) What trends appear to be emerging in the black business district? Although this analysis of the black business district requires consideration of the nature of black businesses in Birmingham in general, analysis of the latter will be limited primarily to those black businesses located in the central business district (C.B.D.), with little attention given to their internal operations.[3] This limitation is made necessary by the scarcity of historical data available.

Methodology

A large portion of the data for this analysis was gathered during the spring and summer of 1965. The primary purpose is to plot the location of black businesses in the C.B.D. from 1883 to 1971 to determine whether black businesses were sufficiently concentrated to warrant the designation of a black business district (B.B.D.).[4] Conceptually, the definition of an area as a B.B.D. has essentially two complementary elements: first, the concentration of black businesses in a specific area of the C.B.D. or some other section of the city; and second, a large proportion of the clientele attracted to the area are black.[5] However, for earlier periods, the discussion will rely more heavily on the former element, since it can be defined more precisely. Accordingly, the B.B.D. is defined as the contiguous concentration of at least 50 percent of all black businesses located in the C.B.D. at any given point in time.

The data employed in this analysis were derived primarily from three sources: historical documents, interviews, and participant observation. Historical data were used extensively to construct a general history of Birmingham, the black community, and the development of the B.B.D. The source of these data include material from books, newspapers, articles,

census reports, and the city directory. Most of the data on the number, types, and location of black businesses in the C.B.D. were obtained from the city directory of Birmingham for selected years.[6] The exact nature and extent of the bias in the reporting of black businesses in the directory is not known. However, researchers who have used city directories as a source of data on the residential distribution of populations according to socioeconomic characteristics report the data as generally reliable, though individuals in the lower socioeconomic strata are generally underreported (cf. Goldstein, 1958; Slesinger, 1971). We would also expect the underreporting of small black businesses, since a fee was generally charged in order for the name of a business to be placed in the directory.

A total of twenty-five interviews were conducted to obtain data on historical and current trends of black businesses in Birmingham.[7] Five of the respondents were individuals who had previously owned and operated businesses in the C.B.D., while the remaining respondents consisted of individuals who operated businesses in the C.B.D. in 1965.[8]

The method of participant observation was useful in gathering descriptive data on the number and types of establishments located in the B.B.D., the type of individuals most frequently found in the district, as well as a description of the nature and types of activities to be found in the district. The actual observation period extended from the first of June to the middle of August of 1965.[9]

III. THE ECOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE B.B.D.

Prior to the 20th century, the phenomenon of a B.B.D. in Birmingham was nonexistent. In the early growth of the C.B.D., black businesses were well integrated into it. Whites and blacks operated businesses on the same streets and blocks. Nineteenth through 21st Street between 1st through 4th Avenue was and still is the heart of the C.B.D. of Birmingham (Hornady, 1921: 68; and Henley, 1960: 41). Most of the black businesses reported in the city directory between 1883 and 1900 were located in this area (see Table I and Diagram I). Any number of factors could possibly be advanced to account for this situation, however, this writer can only think of two that were probably of any real significance.

First, it should be noted that Birmingham was a young industrial town which became incorporated during the Reconstruction period, when the norms governing the relations between blacks and whites were in transition (Woodward, 1951 and 1966).[10] Black businessmen, as others, were probably motivated to locate their businesses in an area which afforded them access to a large number of potential customers. Inasmuch as the C.B.D. was in its infancy, competition for space was probably not very intense; thus, the small black businessman had the opportunity of sharing with others in the development of the C.B.D. This pattern of location of black businesses is one that was primarily associated with those Southern cities that were born during the period of Reconstruction (cf. Harmon et al., 1929; Pierce, 1947; and Kinzen and Sagarin, 1950). In somewhat older cities, in both the South and the North, the black businessman had to either be contented with locating his business in a section of the C.B.D. that was previously

TABLE 1

The Street Location of Black Businesses from 1883 to 1970 in Percent: Birmingham, Alabama[a]

Location										
		1883	1890	1899	1910	1915	1925	1936	1965[b]	1970[c]
	Total N	(14)	(37)	(92)	(252)	(308)	(247)	(115)	(129)	(115)
North										
1st Avenue		7.1		13.0	4.4	3.6	1.2			.9
2nd Avenue		7.1	24.3	9.8	13.9	12.3	3.6			
3rd Avenue		21.4	24.3	14.3	9.9	10.4	14.2	3.7		
4th Avenue			16.2	4.4	8.3	15.3	23.1	44.4	55.8	48.7
5th Avenue					.8	1.3	1.6	.9	14.01	17.4
6th Avenue			2.7	1.1	1.6	2.0	2.0	.9		
14th Street				1.1	5.2	3.3	3.2	2.8		
15th Street					1.2	3.3	1.2	3.7		
16th Street					.8	2.3	2.0	3.7	6.2	8.7
17th Street			2.7	1.1	3.2	4.6	6.5	18.5	20.6	15.6
18th Street			5.4	8.7	13.1	14.0	22.7	12.9	3.9	7.0
19th Street		7.1	8.1	4.4	2.4	2.9	.8			.9
20th Street		14.3	2.7	6.5	2.4	1.6	.4			

TABLE 1. Continued

	1883	1890	1899	1910	1915	1925	1936	1965	1970
21st Street	7.1	2.7			.7	.8			
22nd Street		2.7	1.1	1.2	1.0	.4			
23rd Street			1.1			.8			
24th Street			1.1	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.9		
25th Street					.3	.4	.9		
26th Street				.4	1.6	2.8	6.5		
South									
1st Avenue		8.1	1.1	5.2	2.6	1.2	1.9		
2nd Avenue			3.3	3.6	1.3	.8			
3rd Avenue				3.2	2.0	1.6			
Morris Avenue			3.3	2.4	1.6	.4	.9		
16th Street					.7				
17th Street				.8					
18th Street			4.4	3.2	3.9	4.1	1.9		
19th Street				.4	.3				
20th Street	35.7		19.6	6.8	4.2	.4			

TABLE 1. Continued

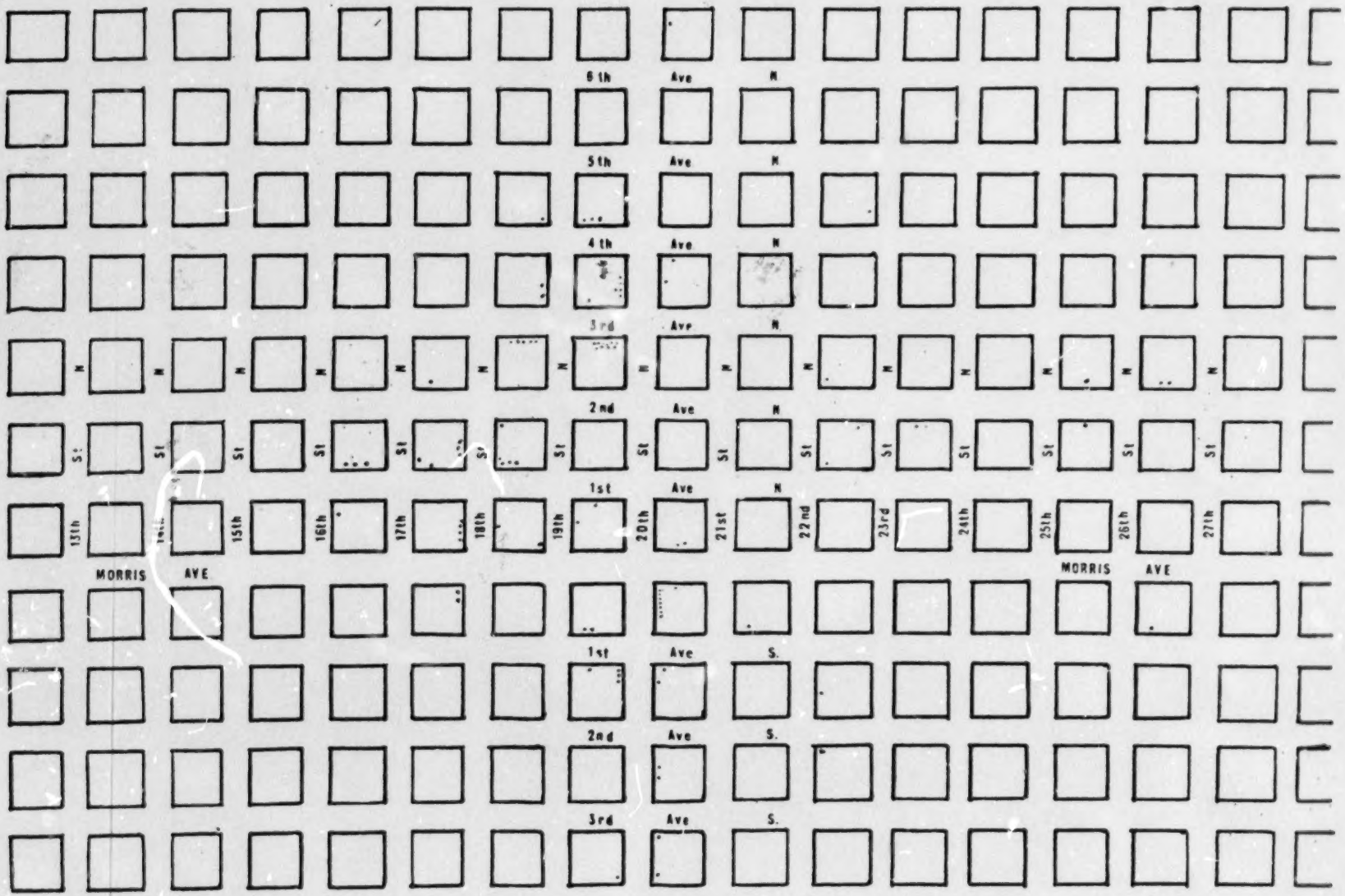
	1883	1890	1899	1910	1915	1925	1936	1965	1970
20th Street	35.7		19.6	6.8	4.2	.4			
21st Street				2.8					
22nd Street			1.1	.4	.3				
23rd Street				1.2	1.3	2.4			
Total (percent)	100.0	99.9	100.5	100.4	100.3	99.8	100.1	100.0	99.2

[a]Birmingham City directory for the years indicated.

[b]Statistics for 1965 were collected by author during the summer of 1965.

[c]Statistics for 1970 were collected by the Urban League of Birmingham.

DIAGRAM I. BLOCK LOCATION OF BLACK BUSINESSES IN THE C.B.D. OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, 1899[a]



[a]The dots indicate the approximate location of black businesses within each block.

occupied by others or locate in other sections of the city (usually where there was a heavy concentration of blacks)--the former was generally the case in the South, while the latter was generally the case in the North and East.

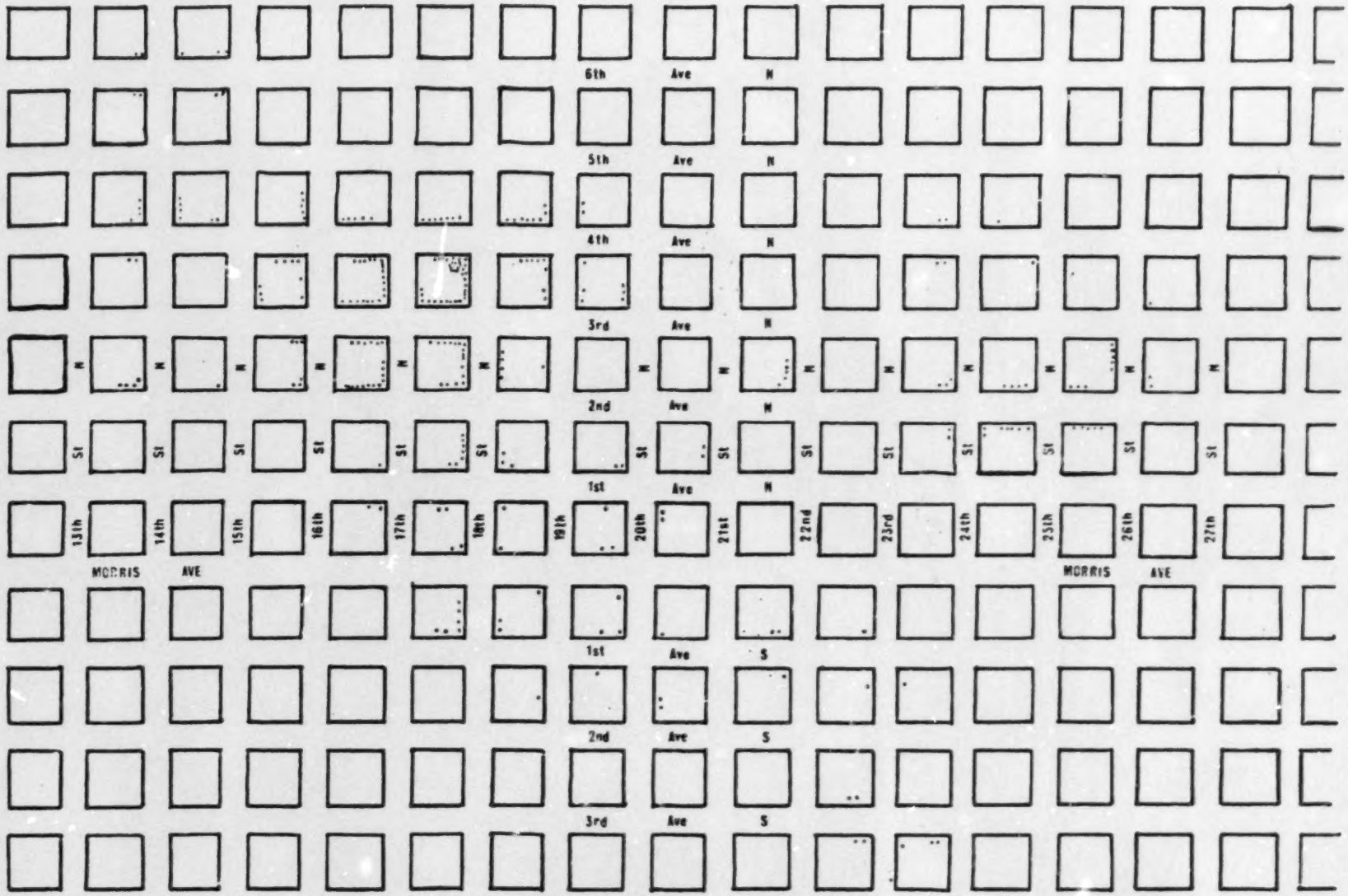
The second factor which was significant in influencing the location of black businesses on the main thoroughfares in the C.B.D. is the fact that blacks frequently dominated in the marketing of certain types of goods and services. Such was the case in the mechanical crafts, barber shops, meat markets, eating establishments and lodgings, and footwear manufacturing and repairs (Harmon, et al., 1929: 33; DuBois, 1898; and Woodson, 1934). The fact that most of these businesses catered either to both blacks and whites or each separately partially accounts for their location in the C.B.D. contiguous with white businesses.

At the turn of the 20th century, black businesses began to show signs of concentration west of 19th Street between 2nd through 4th Avenue down to 16th Street North (Table I and Diagram I). Their number and the presence of white businesses on some of these streets and avenues suggest that a B.B.D. still did not exist. However, this concentration served as the basis for the location of other black businesses in this section of the C.B.D., which several years later developed into a discernible pattern. After 1900, when the number and types of black businesses began to rapidly increase, their concentration also became heavier in this section of the C.B.D. Eighteenth Street and 4th Avenue became the main artery for black businesses. The black-owned Alabama Penny Saving Bank erected a six storey building at the corner of 18th Street and 4th Avenue, which

housed most of the black professionals during this period, and which probably helped to stabilize black businesses in this section of the C.B.D. (Alabama Penny Saving Bank, 1914).[11] In 1915, approximately 60 percent of all black businesses in the C.B.D. were located in a section bounded by 19th Street on the east, 14th Street on the west, 2nd Avenue on the south, and 6th Avenue on the north (see Diagram II). It should be noted that only about 50 percent of the black businesses in this section of the C.B.D. were located contiguously, with respect to each other. It is not known exactly how many white businesses were also located in this area. What is apparent, however, is that the pattern of black business location in the C.B.D. in 1915 probably marked the beginning of a B.B.D. in Birmingham.[12] Indeed, the concentration of black businesses on 3rd, 4th, and 5th Avenue between 18th through 16th Street was approximately 70 percent in 1936, 100 percent in 1965, and 98 percent in 1970. Thus, in contrast to the pattern of black business location established in the 1880s, black businesses are currently contiguously located and segregated from white businesses in the C.B.D.

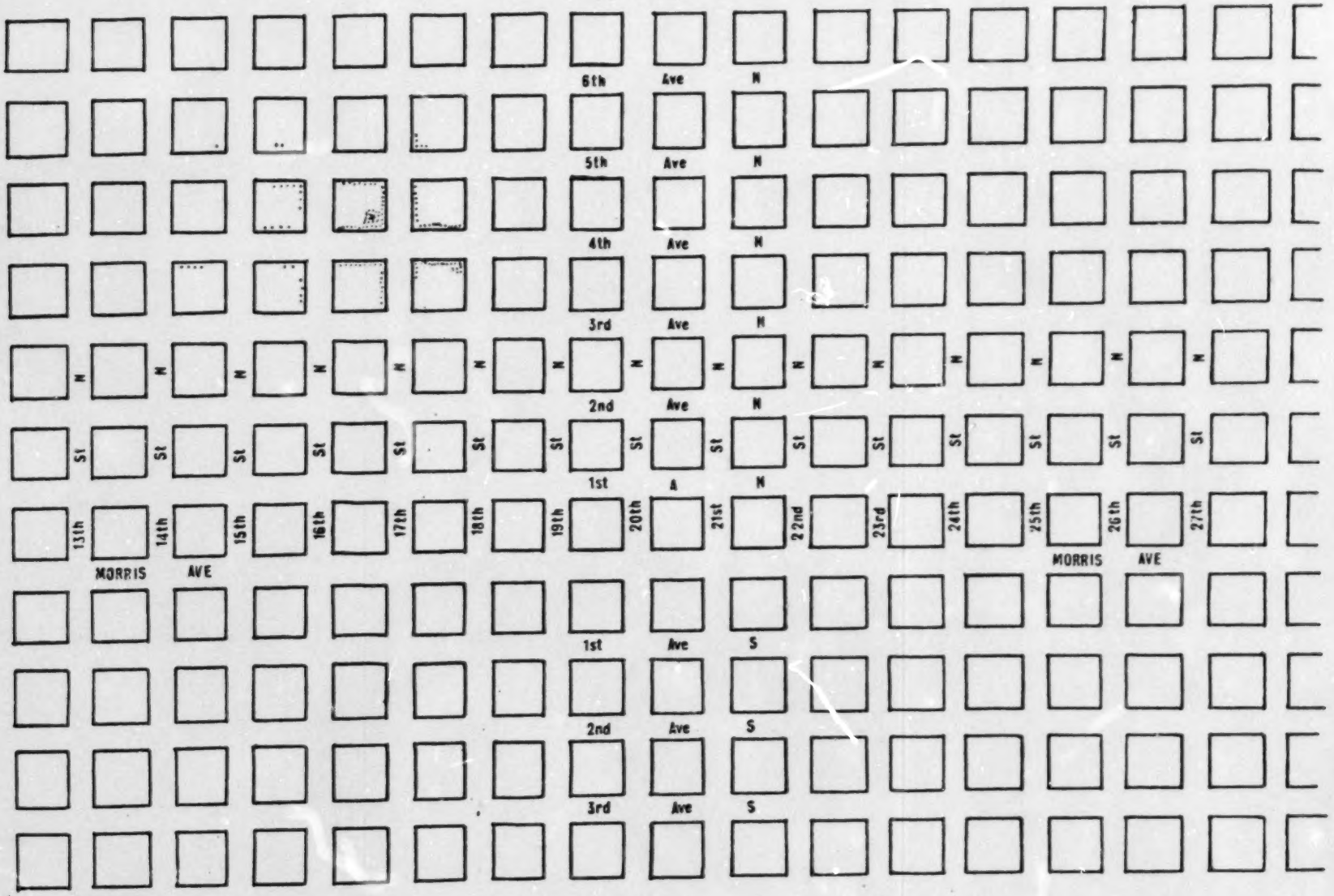
Explanations as to why black businesses moved from a pattern of dispersion and integration to one of concentration and segregation cannot be supported with any "hard" statistical data. However, the interview data collected in 1965 from retired and active black businessmen along with an understanding of the changing nature of black-white relations after the period of Reconstruction in the South can help to account partially for this shift in location. One crucial factor which influenced the transitional character of the location of black businesses in the C.B.D.

DIAGRAM II. BLOCK LOCATION OF BLACK BUSINESSES IN THE C.B.D. OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, 1915[a]



[a] ... indicate the approximate location of black businesses within each block.

DIAGRAM III. BLOCK LOCATION OF BLACK BUSINESSES IN THE C.B.D. OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, 1965[a]



[a]The dots indicate the approximate location of black businesses within each block.

during the 1890s and 1900s was the expansion of white businesses in the district. This was a period of rapid commercial and industrial growth accompanied by a great deal of land speculation (Arnes, 1925; Henderson, 1921; and Owen, 1938). Given the fact that the average black business was small in terms of capital investment and annual volume,[13] its ability to compete with whites for "choice" business locations in the C.B.D. was probably small. Several retired businessmen indicated that there were a number of restrictions placed on black businessmen, not only in terms of where they could locate their businesses but also in terms of the type of business they were allowed to operate.[14] In the words of one physician who established a general practice in the C.B.D. in the early 1920s:

> It is very questionable whether Negroes could have located their businesses in any section of downtown Birmingham other than on 4th Avenue. The city would not issue operating business licenses to Negroes unless they were going to locate their businesses in the 4th Avenue section or in a Negro residential neighborhood. It was generally assumed that Negro businesses would cater to Negroes and not to whites. But even more important, the Negro had to justify why he wanted to open a business in the first place. One of the reasons why there were so few general retail stores owned by Negroes is the fact that the city fathers saw fit to refuse Negroes the opportunity to operate these types of businesses; and even if he could get a license, where in the hell would he get the capital to start it? Certainly not from the white controlled banks downtown.

Many blacks were forced to move to less desirable locations, because the owners of the property refused to renew their leases. Similarly, blacks who did own commercial property in the C.B.D. were pressured to sell and move their businesses. One thing which seems certain is that blacks who relocated their businesses in the C.B.D., were more likely to have relocated them in the section west and north of 18th Street from 3rd to 6th Avenue. According to the city directories of Birmingham published

between 1883 and 1899, this section of the C.B.D. was a thinly settled black residential area, which only later became the center of the black business world.

Racial segregation in the South was important in shaping the economic environment in which black businessmen have had to function (Brimmer, 1971: 265-266). The establishment of "Jim Crow" laws in the South during the latter part of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th were designed to segregate the races and relegate blacks to the lower end of the social, economic, and political strata (Woodward, 1966: 7). The precedence for these legal "separate but equal" codes was set by the United States Supreme Court's decisions of 1883 and 1896 (Franklin, 1969: 342). Birmingham, in the first two decades of the 20th century, established its own Jim Crow laws specifying distinct separation of the races by well-defined physical barriers, and included "any room, hall, theatre, picture house, auditorium, yard, court, ball park, or other indoor or outdoor place" (cited in Woodward, 1966: 100; see also Woodward, 1951: 321-368). The effects that these laws had on the nature and locational aspects of black businesses were far reaching. From a historical perspective, segregation and discrimination created a dual market for the patronage of the black consumer.[15]

In the market place, the white businessman's acceptance and recognition of the black consumer tended to vary according to the economics involved, the degree of contact and intimacy required to perform a service, and the prevailing definition of blacks' position in the social structure. Blacks, for example, have always had access to white businesses whose activities centered around providing the basic

necessities for living, i.e., food, clothing, and shelter (Media/Scope, 1969: 39). Contact in these kinds of establishments is impersonal and casual, and mainly involves the exchange of money for merchandise.[16] The situation in personal service, eating and drinking, and recreational types of establishments was radically different. Blacks' patronage of barber and beauty shops, restaurants, mortuaries, entertainment centers, taverns, hotels and motels, and certain types of professionally oriented establishments (basically the medical ones) was severely restricted, with slight variations as one moves from one region of the country to another. Adherence to the doctrine of separation and the inherent superiority of the white race would not permit the closeness of contact, and the opportunity for interpersonal interactions that these establishments often afforded (Johnson, 1943).

Blacks developed their own versions of these types of businesses as a result of the restrictions placed upon their patronage in the white business community. These businesses constitute the core of the black business world, and they reflect in origin and persistence areas where discrimination and segregation have been most severe (Cross, 1969; Ginzberg, 1968; Sagarin, 1950; Pierce, 1947; Foley, 1966; Coles, 1967; Gloster, 1969; Samuels, 1969; Frazier, 1957; Brimmer, 1971). Tables II and III tend to suggest that the pattern of business development among blacks in the Birmingham S.M.S.A. and the C.B.D. over the past eighty years reflects trends characteristic of black businesses in general. In the C.B.D., retail trade, in the form of convenience goods stores,[17] finance, insurance, and real estate, selected service establishments, including personal services, and professional services have dominated.[18] Also, during this eighty-year period, there were very few if any shopping

TABLE II

Selected Statistics on Black Owned Business Firms
in the Birmingham S.M.S.A., 1969[a]

Industry Division	Firms in Per Cent Total (N = 988)	Per cent paid employees[b] (26.82)	Average Receipt per Firm[c,d] (In $1,000) (Total= 31,770)
Contract Construction	8.90	21.59	68*
Manufacturers	1.31	76.92	9**
Transportation, etc.	4.25	23.80	16
Wholesale trade	1.41	57.14	167
Retail trade	37.44	34.59	31
Finance, Insurance Real Estage	2.53	56.00	438*
Selected Services	37.14	17.43	(D)
Other Industries	.80	37.50	28*
Industries not classified	6.17	14.75	(D)

[a]Source: Special census of Minority-Owned Business: 1969, MB-1: Table 6.

[b]The average number of employees per firm was six, with finance, insurance and real estate industry having the largest number of employees.

[c](D) indicate that the value was withheld to avoid disclosing figures for individual companies.

[d]Where (*) indicates average receipts for those firms with paid employees; and (**) indicates average receipt for those firms without paid employees.

TABLE III

Selected Statistics on Black Firms
in the C.B.D. of Birmingham, Alabama: 1883 to 1970[a]

Industry	1883	1890	1899	1910	1915	1925	1936	1965	1970
N =	(14)	(37)	(92)	(252)	(308)	(247)	(115)	(129)	(115)
Contract Construction		2.7	1.1	2.0	2.3	.8	1.7	.8	.9
Manufacturers		13.5	2.2	17.5	13.6	3.2	2.6	4.7	3.5
Transportation, etc.								1.6	.9
Wholesale Trade		10.8	9.9	4.0	5.8	6.1	5.2	3.9	3.5
Retail Trade	28.6	27.3	28.3	27.0	18.8	17.8	20.0	20.2	19.1
Finance, Insurance, Real estate		2.7	2.2	6.4	3.3	4.5	4.4	10.9	14.8
Selected Services -	71.4	37.8	51.1	34.9	46.8	57.5	50.4	39.5	33.9
Professional Services		5.4	5.4	8.3	9.4	10.1	15.7	18.6	23.5
Total Percent	100.0	100.2	100.2	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.2	100.1

[a]Source: Birmingham City Directory, 1883 to 1936; statistics for 1965 collected by the author; and statistics for 1970 from Birmingham Urban League's 1970 directory of black business firms.

goods stores, which, according to Taeuber (1964), are the type of retail businesses that have been most resistant to decentralization. The few manufacturing and wholesale business in the C.B.D. have consisted mainly of shoe manufacturers (in the early period), beauty supply companies, newspapers, and printing offices. In conclusion, the greatest barrier to black businesses imposed by segregation and discrimination was the restriction of their activities to providing convenience goods and personal services to a black consumer oriented market. The contiguous location of black businesses in the C.B.D. facilitated their access to black consumers, generally the only consumer market they had access to.

IV. THE B.B.D. AS A CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AREA[19]

The B.B.D. has also functioned as a cultural and social area. As the B.B.D. became a clearly defined territorial entity, it took on an identity and a reality separate and distinct from the larger white business world. To the blacks who catered to it, it became an essential part of their segregated world; and to the whites, who viewed it as outside their domain, it became the little autonomous and infamous world of the blacks. Attached to the B.B.D. is a small segment of the black population. These individuals find both in the establishments which dominate the district and in their interpersonal relationships, more available means of satisfying certain aspirations which cannot be satisfied in the larger community. To these individuals, trading and shopping in the B.B.D. are only secondary and incidental. The B.B.D. has a social and moral atmosphere conducive to and permissive of certain types of behaviors and activities which makes it a significant phenomenon

both in the structure of the black community and the larger community as well (Robertson, 1950).

Many B.B.D.'s have been known for the unrestrained and deviant behavior of the people to whom they cater (Drake and Clayton, 1945; Robertson, 1950; Bowens, 1950; Spencer, 1952). The B.B.D. in Birmingham has not been atypical in this respect, for it too has been known for its boisterous characters, its burlesque houses, saloons, poolrooms; its shady shoe, barber, and hat shops; and its hotels and motels. Even as early as the 1880s certain sections of the C.B.D. where black businesses were located aroused the reprobation of some of the city's more "respectable" citizens, black and white. One prominent black suggested (The Evening News, Dec. 29, 1888):

> I am in sympathy with the movement on breaking up the dives. Wish they could be broke, but can it be done? If the saloons of the locality are closed it will only benefit other saloons. I think the licensed dance halls should be prohibited. I favor forcing these lewd women to go to work or leave the city. I suggest that the beginning be made on Fourth Avenue opposite the temple of justice.

The notoriety of the B.B.D. during the first three decades of the 20th century was described and celebrated in the works of Octavious Cohen, a noted author and lecturer during this period. Cohen wrote numerous articles and novels depicting what he conceived of as the social and moral atmosphere of the B.B.D.[20] The following is typical of Cohen's description of the black business district (from the cover of 1926b):

> If you've never heard of Eighteenth Street--you have never heard of Birmingham. Eighteenth Street is not Eighteenth Street. It's a city within a city. It's a land of contrasts, where extremes run wild, where laughter is loudest and blood boils hot, where black men and women each laugh and play with no

> strange eyes to watch, no strange ears to hear . . . Eighteenth Street is that small business and play zone just a stone's throw from city hall where the Frolic Theater's bright lights twinkle and the Harlem cafe beckons--where dark-skinned and dapper city boys meet strut lanky cotton hands from the black belt. Eighteenth Street is a paradise of barbecue stands and poolrooms, of soft drink parlors and barber shops. It's the mecca for cooks and chauffeurs on Thursday nights . . . . Eighteenth Street is the style parade ground for dark-skinned folk as far West as Jackson, Miss., as far South as Selma. It's the Harlem of the South, more famous than Beale Street, more swanky than Cotten Avenue, and more vivid than Lenox Avenue. It's that small zone that extends down Fourth Avenue and takes in Seventeenth Street.

Cohen described the B.B.D. as a playground or dream world, where blacks forgot all of the problems and woes of daily living and had a good time. According to him, there were few incidents of crime or violence in the business district. Its people had a reputation with the law enforcement officials as being well behaved. The numbers and policy games, and "skin" (a card game) and "crap" (dice) games were the most popular forms of recreational activities among blacks in the district.

The accuracy of Cohen's description of the B.B.D. cannot be completedly ascertained. Most white literary critics seem to have accepted his description of life in the B.B.D.--indeed the district was frequently referred to as either the Negro quarter or Cohentown (Hornady, 1921: 68-69). According to the few members of the black middle class, however, Cohen's world was a caricature of blacks and ignored the existence of an accomplished middle class, deprived blacks of human dignity and character, and exploited them for the amusement of whites (Tucker, 1971: 105). George Lee's (1934) noted book on Beale Street in Memphis was an attempt to portray B.B.D.'s as they actually were, and not as the figment of some white author's imagination.

My own participant observation study of the district in 1965 suggests two outstanding features of the area in addition to the purely economic functions that it performs. First, the district is selective of a habitual population of single adult men (mainly between the ages of 18 and 30) who may live in any section of the city; transient males, who happen to be in the city for various reasons; relatively young males and females who live in or near the district. There are few establishments that are family oriented.[21] The few that are are made less attractive to working and middle class black family members because of their appearance, the quality of goods and services offered, and the notorious reputation the district has acquired in terms of the high incidence of various types of deviant activities. In fact, few of these individuals would go near the district were it not for some of the professional services that are provided there. The second outstanding feature of the district is that most of the personal service and eating establishments serve not only their manifest function, but are locales of leisure and sociability for the district's habitual population, as well as locales for illegal liquor and drugs, prostitution, black market goods, and various forms of gambling. Several writers have associated a number of these activities with other B.B.D.'s (O'Brien, 1942; Robertson, 1950; Bowen, 1950; Drake and Clayton, 1945; Spencer, 1952; Suttles, 1968; Liebow, 1967; and Molotch, 1969).

V. EMERGENT TRENDS IN THE B.B.D.

The final question to be addressed in this paper is: What future trends appear to be emerging in the internal structure of the B.B.D.? In general, current trends indicate that some of the economic and socio-

cultural functions traditionally associated with the B.B.D. will continue to decline as (1) the black population continues to decentralize further and further away from the C.B.D.; and (2) as segregation and discrimination in selected areas continue to decline. Detailed longitudinal data, with which this hypothesis can be subjected to rigorous empirical tests are not available. However, we will present some longitudinal statistical data that suggest general trends, which, when combined, are indicative of the fact that this hypothesis may have some merit.

Table IV presents data on land occupancy by type of business in the B.B.D. An inspection of the table suggests a substantial decline in the number of physical structures as well as businesses in the B.B.D. from 1965 to 1971. Of the physical structures (occupied and unoccupied) in the B.B.D. in 1965, 37 percent (N = 145) were no longer there in 1971. Of this total, 22 percent were formerly occupied by businesses, while 15 percent were unoccupied in 1965. Among the (26) unoccupied places, more than half were formerly eating establishments, with the remainder selected retail and personal establishments.[22] Two general conclusions emerge from these data: (1) the substantial decline in occupied places can be associated with all major categories of business enterprises listed in Table III, with convenience and personal service establishments experiencing the largest decline; and (2) while no new structures have been erected in the district, the space occupied by those that have been demolished was either transformed into parking lots or was added to already existing businesses.[23] If current trends continue, the whole district may be transformed into a parking area.

In 1965, an attempt was made to determine what happened to the businesses that were previously located in the twenty-six unoccupied

TABLE IV

Land Occupancy by Type of Business in the B.B.D., Birmingham, Alabama: 1965, 1971[a,b]

Business[c]	1965	1971	Change
Total N. =	145	91	-54
Clothing	4	2	-2
Drugs	2	2	
Grocers	1		-1
Flowers	1	2	1
Pawn		1	1
Music	2		-2
Variety	1	1	
Service stations	2	2	
Wigs	1		-1
Church goods	2		-2
Distributing Co.	2	1	-1
Beauty Supply Co.	4	2	-2
Barbers	9	9	
Beauticians	12	8	-4
Shoe shine and Repairs	4	2	-2
Billard parlors	5	2	-3
Eating and drinking	17	11	-6
Cleaners and Laundries	4	2	-2
Hotel and Motels	6	6	
Tailors	2	2	
Funeral Homes	1	1	
Cab Companies	2	1	-1
Theaters	2	2	
Watch repairs	1		-1
Employment office	1		-1
Newspapers	3	1	-2
Medical specialists	1	1	
Radio stations	2	2	
Printers	3	3	
Photographers	3	1	-2
Parking lots	7	9	2
Banks	1	1	
Real estate companies	3	2	-1
Finance and Investments	1		-1
Insurance companies	4	4	
Non-business Occupants	4	4	
Total unoccupied structures	26	4	-22

TABLE IV Continued

[a]Source: These data were obtained by an actual canvass of the B.B.D. in 1965 by this writer, and in 1971 by James E. Wilson who is a student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

[b]Geographically, the B.B.D. is bound by 18th Street going east, 15th street going west, 3rd avenue going south, and 5th avenue going north. Note that the vast majority of black businesses whose location in the C.B.D. of Birmingham was plotted as in Diagram III were located within these boundaries.

[c]The businesses reported also include white businesses, which numbered 18 in 1965. No comparable statistics are available for 1971. In addition, any businesses housed in a multi-structured building were not included unless they were located on the ground floor.

places in the B.B.D. Relatively reliable data were obtained from individuals who owned or operated businesses near twenty-two of these unoccupied places.[24] These respondents indicated that 13 of these businesses failed, the remaining 9 moved to other locations, and the average length of vacancy for the unoccupied places as of 1965 was about six months. No comparable data were available for 1971. The data presented in Table V indicate that in 1970 less than 15 percent of all black-owned retail and selected service establishements in the Birmingham S.M.S.A. were located in the B.B.D. One thing seems certain, the thirty-two businesses that existed in 1965 but were no longer located in the B.B.D. in 1971 either failed or moved to other locations.

The failure and relocation of black businesses away from the B.B.D. can be partially accounted for by a number of factors. The internal structure and conditions of the businesses in the B.B.D., as well as desegregation and reduction of discrimination in selected areas might be the major factors opearating to produce the business failures.

Most of the establishments in the district are made less attractive to working and middle class black family members because of their physical appearance and condition, the quality and quantity of goods and services offered, and the notorious reputation the district has acquired in terms of the high incidence of various types of deviant activities. Since the district has been traditionally identified as being an area for blacks, very few, if any, whites frequent the area. Any person who locates a business in the district would be confronted with enormous difficulties, since these factors will invariably restrict the consumer market the business would have to depend upon for patronage. For the black businessman, the situation is made more dismal by the fact that even if he wanted to

TABLE V

Selected Statistics on Black-Owned Business Firms in the C.B.D. and Birmingham S.M.S.A., 1969, 1970[a]

Industry[b]	Total Firms Birmingham S.M.S.A. 1969[c]	Percent of Total Firms in C.B.D.: 1970[d]
	N = 988	115
Contract Construction	88	1.1
Manufacturers	13	30.8
Transportation, etc.	42	2.4
Wholesale Trade	14	28.6
Retail Trade	370	6.0
Finance, Insurance, Real estate	25	68.0
Selected Services	367	10.6
Other Industries	8	0.0
Industries not classified	61	0.0

[a]The comparison being made here between those black firms reported by the Census bureau for the Birmingham S.M.S.A. for 1969 and those reported by the Birmingham Urban League in 1970 is only an approximation, since the data were collected at different points in time and by different agencies. However, since the time interval between the two periods is less than six months, it was felt that the comparison would be illustrative.

[b]All of the black business firms reported by the Birmingham Urban League were placed in the first seven categories based upon the Census Bureau's detailed breakdown of each category in the special census of minority-owned businesses.

[c]Source: Special census of minority-owned business: 1969, MB-1: Table 6.

[d]Source: Birmingham Urban League, Black Business Directory, 1970.

improve the general condition and appearance of a structure, he is less in position to do so, because most of the property as well as the physical structures are owned by whites.[25] According to a recent article in the Birmingham News (20 October, 1971: 18), a great deal of new construction is being planned for the C.B.D. It is not known how the area occupied by the B.B.D. will be affected, but it would appear that such a trend could have the effect of discouraging property owners in the district from engaging in any new construction at least until the details of the redevelopment plan are specified.

Several writers have suggested that the decline in personal service and retail establishments among blacks since the landmark decision of the U. S. Supreme Court in 1954 is a reflection of the increasing trend toward desegregation in selected areas, accompanied by blacks' inability to compete with whites in areas where they once had exclusive control over the patronage patterns of black consumers (Cross, 1969; Levine, 1969; Samuels, 1969; Brimmer, 1966 and 1971). The basic argument here is that with changes in the structural relations between blacks and whites, the black consumer has gradually begun to have access to non-black owned channels of goods and services; with current trends indicating that he is turning increasingly to these businesses because in many instances, they offer extra services, and a luxurious and courteous atmosphere for the same amount of money (Johnson Publishing Company, 1967). One obvious weakness in this explanation of black business failures is the fact that these failures could merely reflect trends in the decline in small businesses in general (Lundberg, 1969). While it does appear that black businesses in the areas of retail trade and selected services have declined at a much

greater rate than white businesses of the same type (cf. Samuels, 1969: 60-73), precaution should be taken to ensure that the explanations advanced for business failures among blacks describe conditions that are unique to blacks and not conditions that affect all small businesses.

Finally, the relocation of black businesses to areas outside of the C.B.D. (including the B.B.D.) could be in part a response to the decentralization of the black population away from the C.B.D. It is known, for example, that retail and service establishments are highly responsive to the concentration of their respective clientele populations (cf. Berry, 1967; Taeuber, 1964; Liu, 1970). Taeuber's (1964) analysis of data from the 1954 and 1958 censuses of business indicate that there has been a general decline in the total number of retail establishments located in the C.B.D. of S.M.S.A.'s.[26] In addition, she noted that metropolitan population growth and decentralization of populations away from C.B.D.'s were two of the major factors responsible for this decline. Data from the 1963 and 1967 censuses of business, and the 1960 and 1970 censuses of population (Bureau of the Census, 1970: Table I; and 1971c: Table I) indicate that the decline in retail businesses in the C.B.D. of Birmingham is continuing, with the continuing decentralization of the population.

Table VII presents data, extending over a thirty year period, on the distribution of the black population in the Birmingham S.M.S.A., the central city, and those census tracts adjacent to and including the C.B.D. Several general conclusions can be drawn from these data. First, for the S.M.S.A. as a whole, the black population increased from 1940 to 1960, declined from 1960 to 1970, and declined in terms of the percent of the total S.M.S.A. population it represented. Secondly, the percent of the

TABLE VI

Selected Statistics on Business Firms in C.B.D., Birmingham, Alabama: 1963, 1965, 1967.[a]

Type of Firm	Total Firms 1963	Total Firms 1965[b]	Total Firms 1967	Total Black Firms 1965	
				N	Percent of 1965 Firms
Retail Stores(Total)	468	435	401	26	6.00
Lumber, bldg. material, hardware, farm equip.	11	12	13		
General merchandise	24	24	23		
Food Stores	27	25	24	1	3.77
Automotive Dealers	10	11	11		
Service stations	19	14	9	2	14.29
Apparel, Accessory store	85	80	74	3	3.80
Furniture & home equip.	62	61	59		
Eating and drinking	101	93	84	13	14.10
Drug Stores	14	13	12	2	13.38
Other retail stores	115	104	92	7	6.80
Selected Services(Total)[c]	28	28		2	9.1
Hotels, motels	22	22		2	9.1
Motion picture theaters	6	6			

[a]Source: Census of Business, 1970: Table I; data on black businesses collected in 1965 by author.

[b]The total number of firms reported for 1965 was estimated by taking the mean of the total number of firms reported for 1963 and 1967.

[c]Statistics on Selected service firms in 1963 was taken from the census of business for that year (1966: Table I). Comparable statistics were not reported for 1967.

TABLE VII

The Distribution of the Black Population for the S.M.S.A., Central City, and Selected Census Tracts, Birmingham, Alabama: 1940 to 1970[a]

Unit	Census Year			
	1940	1950	1960	1970
Black Population, S.M.S.A.	179,150	204,370	231,223	217,884
Percent of Total S.M.S.A. Population	39.0	37.4	32.1	29.5
Black Population of Central City	109,938	130,115	135,113	126,362
Percent of Black Pop., S.M.S.A.	61.4	63.7	58.4	58.0
Percent of Total City Population	41.1	39.9	39.6	42.0
Black Population of Census Tracts[b]	31,836	30,124	33,040	10,220
Percent of Black Pop., City	29.0	23.2	24.5	8.1
Percent of Black Pop., S.M.S.A.	17.8	14.7	14.3	4.7

[a]Source: Bureau of the Census, 1942, Table I; 1952, Table I; 1961, Table P-1; 1971b, Tables I and II; and 1971c, Table I.

[b]The figures presented represent the total number of blacks in those census tracts adjacent to and including tract 27 (tracts 26, 28, 43 to 46). Tract 27 is the Central Business District. In 1960 and 1970, tract 28 was sub-divided into 28-A and 28-b. These two tracts were recombined to obtain comparable figures for 1960 and 1970.

total black population of the Birmingham S.M.S.A. residing in the central city declined from 64 percent in 1950 to 58 percent in 1970; while the percent of blacks residing in the central city relative to the total city population increased. Finally, the percent of blacks residing in these census tracts adjacent to and including the central business district relative to the total black population of the central city and the Birmingham S.M.S.A. experienced a substantial decline. From these data, we can conclude that the black population of the Birmingham S.M.S.A. has decentralized away from the C.B.D., with the largest amount of decentralization occurring from the area around the C.B.D. to other sections of the central city. Thus, the relocation of black businesses away from the C.B.D. could have been produced by the decentralization of the black population. I should point out, however, that the residential movement of blacks away from the central business district was partly a result of the demolition of residential structures in this area to make way for the construction of an expressway.

VI. DISCUSSION

Summary

A number of issues have been discussed thus far in this paper, involving the initial development, persistence, and the most recent decline of the B.B.D. in Birmingham. A brief summary of the major points emphasized in previous sections is in order. First, the ecological development of the B.B.D. in Birmingham is somewhat similar to the pattern identified for B.B.D.'s in other Southern cities. The location of black businesses moved from a pattern of dispersion to contiguous concentration in the C.B.D. The transitional nature of

black-white relations in the first two decades subsequent to the ending of the Civil War, the founding and growth of Birmingham during this period, and the economic requirements for a choice location in the C.B.D. for (black and white) consumer accessibility were probably important factors that influenced the pattern of dispersion of black businesses in the C.B.D. prior to around 1895. On the other hand, the commercial and industrial growth of Birmingham, accompanied by an expansion of white businesses in the C.B.D.; the small capital investment and annual sales volume of black businesses rendered them ineffectual in their ability to compete with whites; the restrictions placed on blacks in terms of the types of businesses they were permitted to operate and where they could be located; and the creation of a dual market for the patronage of black consumers, because of the establishment of "Jim Crow" laws and selective discrimination were probably the most significant factors that influenced a shift from a pattern of dispersion to one of contiguous concentration during the first decades of the 20th century. It was noted that B.B.D. has also traditionally functioned as a cultural and social center for blacks, and that attached to it are certain establishments and a habitue population that embrace a deviant or underworld subculture. Finally, it was noted that the B.B.D. is experiencing land use changes, as indicated by the substantial decline in the number of businesses located within its boundaries during the past decade, and the increasing number of parking lots that have taken the place of demolished physical structures. Further, it was suggested that high business failures and the relocation of other businesses were the primary indicators of the declining functions of the B.B.D. with respect to the black population of Birmingham.

Implications

The implication of this analysis with respect to the B.B.D. in Birmingham is clear. The space occupied by the B.B.D. will probably give way to other commerical forms, designed for other functions and oriented toward a different consumer market. The continuing changes in land use activities in the B.B.D. proved ample indication that the B.B.D. might disappear in the foreseeable future. This does not mean, however, that black businesses will disappear, or even that another B.B.D. could not develop in another section of the city, where blacks are sufficiently concentrated. Indeed, the existence of neighborhood "shopping districts" is based on the premise that a sufficiently large concentration of potential consumers are present, such that the businesses therein can thrive. The demise of the B.B.D. in its current location is not without its predecessors. Many business districts or business thoroughfares oriented toward other (ethnic) groups have experienced similar fates, because of basic social, economic, and demographic changes (Berry, 1967; Molotch, 1969; Lee, 1949; Yuan, 1963; Lieberson, 1963; and Glazer and Moynihan, 1963).

While it would clearly be inappropriate here to generalize on the fate of B.B.D.'s located in other large cities throughout this nation, a few observations on the possible implications that the data presented on the B.B.D. in Birmingham might represent are in order. It is possible that other B.B.D.'s might experience similar declines in the economic as well as sociocultural functions they are performing for blacks given similar conditions of development, increasing decentralization of the black population, and increasing changes in the structure of black-white relations. Further investigation of B.B.D.'s on a national scale could

provide some additional insight on a particular form of adjustment pattern that has been utilized by many different ethnic groups as a means of "group survival" in large urban areas. In addition, such a study, at this point in time, would provide some "needed" data on the impact that social and demographic changes have on this particular type of adjustment pattern, with respect to its content and spatial location.

NOTES

1. Historically, the development of separate business arteries in urban areas has been charasteristic of other ethnic groups as well. See for example: Wirth, 1928; Blumenthal, 1932; Whyte, 1943; Lee, 1949; Antonovsky, 1960; Lee, 1960, and Smythe, 1964.
2. The exclusion of black business districts located in Western cities in the discussion was done primarily because most of these districts developed within the last thirty or forty years, and also because few attempts have been made to study them historically.
3. By internal operation, we mean the mechanics of operating a business, to include capital investment, volume of sales, number of employees, equipment, supplies, etc.
4. The physical boundaries of the C.B.D. in Birmingham for the purpose of this analysis do not conform exactly with those defined by the Census Bureau (Bureau of the Census, 1970: 2-3). The southern boundary has been extended to include three additional avenues (see Diagrams I, II, and III), because businesses have been located on these avenues since the early development of the city.
5. It should be obvious to the reader that there is a certain degree of arbitrariness to this definition. Purely from a historical perspective, the concentration of black businesses within the C.B.D. can be statistically demonstrated, while documentation of whether or not more blacks than whites patronized the establishments in the B.B.D. can only partially be shown through the use of historical documents. It is generally assumed that the concentration of black businesses in a given area is suggestive of a much higher proportion of black patrons than from any other ethnic

group. Observational data for 1965 suggest that this is not an unreasonable assumption.

6. As recently as 1936, all city directories published for the city of Birmingham employed special symbols to distinguish black residents from whites, such that it was not difficult to plot the approximate block location of black businesses simply by the addresses listed in the directory. Data on black businesses for 1965 were obtained by an actual canvass of the C.B.D.

7. Twenty of these interviews were recorded on tape.

8. The former respondents were asked the initial question: "What was the Negro business district like when you operated a business there?"; and the latter group of respondents was asked the initial question "According to your own experiences, how would you describe the B.B.D., and Negro businesses in general in the city of Birmingham?" The interviews took place at the residence of the respondents during the evening hours on weekdays between June and July, 1965.

9. As much time as possible was spent in the B.B.D. during the period of observation, particularly during the weekends. I established residence in a hotel in the district, which was not difficult since I was reared in Birmingham and am acquainted with some of the "regulars" of the B.B.D. My role as an observer was one of active participation, and my purpose for residing in the district was generally known.

10. During the period of Reconstruction, the development of manufacturing and industrial interests acted directly to create new cities and increase the population of others. The mining and industrial towns

were the new phenomena in the South, so new in fact that many had had no previous existence. This was notably true of Birmingham, the site of which was a cotton field in 1869, and which grew from 3,000 in 1880 to 20,000 in 1890 (Buck, 1937: 185). With an abundance of various natural resources that are essential for making steel, Birmingham has experienced remarkable growth since it was founded in 1871, and it has become the leading center in the Southeast for making steel (Arnes, 1910: 216; and Owen, 1938: 401). The development of mines and factories in Birmingham acted directly to create a demand for cheap and copious labor (Henderson, 1921: 350; and Worthman, 1969: 377-381). Blacks constituted a large portion of this labor force, some having migrated to the city from rural areas, while others were transported to the city through the convict lease system. The black population of Birmingham grew from 11,254 in 1890, to 16,575 in 1900, and to 52,305 in 1910 (Bureau of the Census, 1913, Table 2: 60).

11. Around 1924, the Black Masons of the city erected the Masonic Temple Building at the corner of 4th Avenue and 17th Street. A short time thereafter, most of the black professionals of the city relocated their offices in this building.

12. In addition, there were thirty-seven black businesses concentrated on 2nd through 4th Avenue from 24th to 26th Street North in 1915. After this date, the number of black businesses in this area began to decline, such that in 1965 none remained. Needless to say, no explanation can be advanced to account for this particular concentration or why it declined after 1915.

13. Dubois (1898: 19) found that the average capital investment of black businesses was $4,600 in 1898. Pierce (1947: 69) notes that the average volume of business of black businesses in 1944 was $3,260. The special census of minority-owned businesses (Bureau of the Census, 1971, Table I: 16) indicates that the average receipt per black business firm in 1969 was $95,000 for those with paid employees and $7,000 for those without paid employees.

14. Drake and Clayton (1945: 449) made similar observations regarding black businessmen in Chicago during the depression.

15. Gibson (1969) suggests that there are four reasons why the black consumer market exists: (1) forced identification of the people comprising the market; (2) definable purchasing patterns; (3) the size of the market; and (4) the location of the market. Traditions and the historical reaction of both blacks and whites to blacks' physical and subcultural traits have helped to create a specialized market in terms of products and needs (Back, 1963: 42). Thus, studies in anthropometry have indicated some of the differences in physical features between blacks and whites, and some of the socio-cultural definitions that are associated with them (Herskovits, 1955 and 1958; Todd, 1928; Winick, 1964; and Shibutani and Kwan, 1965). These differences can be useful in accounting for some of the consumptive and patronage patterns of blacks. The texture of the hair and the various styles worn by black men and women require different services and products (Gibson, 1969; and Johnson, 1952). The process of embalming and preparing the body for final viewing by the public is different. It has been noted, for example, that some

blacks are willing to pay exorbitant sums to ensure that the remains of their relatives are prepared and stored away properly (Johnson Publishing Company, 1967: 214). The color of blacks' skin, and size and shape of the head and feet have been the basis of preferences for various styles of clothes with differing dimensions (Schwartz, 1963); and for different kinds of personal care products (Gibson, 1969; and Johnson, 1952). Other differences seem to derive from blacks' position in the social structure. For example, the low income of blacks has influenced the kinds of food-stuffs they purchased (Gibson, 1969; Sponsor, 1962; Wall Street Journal, 1961), and where they are likely to do a large part of their shopping (Caplovitz, 1963: 55; and Rich and Jaism, 1968: 45). Low income and the restrictions placed upon blacks in certain social activities created differences in leisure spending behavior (Frazier, 1957; and Fisk, 1963). Finally, as several authors have noted, blacks' behavior in the market place can by analyzed from the point of view of their interest in improving their position and status in the American social structure, and by their preoccupation with specific brands as expressions of quality and prestige (Alexes, 1962; Shafer, 1966; Bauer, 1965; Akers, 1968; Blacks, 1963; Schwartz, 1963; Gibson, 1969; and Media/Scope, 1964).

16. One exception to this is possible the small neighborhood store where store personnel do get to know their customers, and communication goes beyond casual greetings and acknowledgements. Even here, however, the pecuniary profit motive is the primary basis

for interaction. Knowledge of a potential customer's background, character, associates, and ability to meet payments are important factors associated with whether he is considered a good credit risk. Also, this kind of knowledge provides store personnel with more informal means of control and collection without resorting to legal means (Caplovitz, 1963).

17. Convenience goods stores include food stores, eating and drinking places, drug stores, and proprietory stores (see Taeuber, 1964: 164).

18. Professional services consisted primarily of legal and medical services.

19. The discussion which follows only has reference to activities or incidents that occurred prior to 1966. Since that time, no one, to this writer's knowledge, has sought to investigate the social activities associated with the district. Casual observation suggested to me, while on a brief visit in the summer of 1971, that there has been some change, though its extent and nature cannot be specified at this time.

20. The most noted of his novels on the B.B.D. are: Black and Blue (1926a); Polished Ebony (1926b); Gray Dusk (1920); Detours (1922a); Highly Colored (1921); Dark Days and Black Knights (1923); Bigger and Blacker (1925); and Assorted Chocolates (1922b).

21. Here I am referring to shopping and convenience goods stores, and family oriented recreational activities or social activities that have traditionally been associated with C.B.D.'s.

22. The remaining unoccupied places were formerly occupied by one of the following establishments: two clothing stores, and one drug store, barber shop, hotel, music shop, auto repair shop, hat shop, shine parlor, shoe repair shop, radio and T.V. repair shop, and poolroom.
23. This observation is based upon a physical canvassing of the B.B.D. in 1965 and 1971.
24. The data provided by these respondents can only be taken as an indication of what might have happened to these businesses. Several respondents were unable to state definitely that the information provided was accurate. Some data on the four unoccupied places not reported in the discussion were obtained. However, these data will not be reported, because several respondents provided conflicting information on three of these unoccupied places. The other unoccupied place had been vacant for more than two years, and no one was able to recall what had happened to its earlier occupants.
25. In 1965, approximately 80 percent of the commercial structures in the B.B.D. were owned by whites.
26. The Birmingham S.M.S.A. was included in Taeuber's sample of S.M.S.A.'s.

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